

# Observing COVID Protocols

We'd like to thank and congratulate everyone on how well Move-In has gone this week. The cooperation and adherence to COVID-19 protocols from students and their families, student leader volunteers, Student Affairs staff, Public Safety, and Events and Maintenance staff members has been exemplary and we greatly appreciate those efforts.

It also appears that COVID protocols are being followed in indoor settings such as food service lines, the Lopes Shop and Lopes Mart. As a reminder, when classes begin on Monday, 100% compliance for mask-wearing and physical distancing is required in academic settings. That includes the GCU Library and Academic Excellence Centers in addition to classrooms and laboratories.

We're off to a great start in those locations.

Where observance of COVID protocols has been an issue this week is during informal outdoor student gatherings during the evenings, in particular the community area outside of the Grove residence halls. As stated in previous communications, **face coverings are required in all outdoor settings where physical distancing of at least 6 feet is not possible**. Because physical distancing can be difficult to maintain, we are strongly encouraging students to wear a mask in these outdoor settings at all times. Public Safety personnel will be onsite this evening to remind students of these protocols and provide disposable masks to those who need them.

GCU is a unique college environment due to the high percentage of students who live on campus. That helps build the incredible sense of community on our campus, but it also creates challenges when dealing with a pandemic. We want students to remain on campus as much as possible this semester, creating some semblance of a bubble, rather than go off campus to socialize. And we want students to be outdoors, where there is much less risk of spreading of the virus. But to keep the most vulnerable among our campus community as safe as possible, we need everyone to be diligent in wearing a mask in this environment.

GCU's campus in many ways resembles that of Notre Dame, which saw a spike in positive COVID cases when it opened this fall and had to shut down the campus for two weeks. Face coverings are mandatory at Notre Dame in all settings – indoors and outdoors – other than students' living areas.

We want to avoid any temporary shutdown of campus or enforcement of stricter guidelines. We're on the right track but need everyone to do their part and diligently abide by the requirements and behaviors we have agreed upon. By meeting these goals, we can maximize the opportunity to have a safe and successful fall semester.

Grand Canyon University